



## MEDIA RELEASE

### **Guyana Tourism Authority wins the ‘Destination Stewardship Award’ at CTO’s Caribbean Sustainable Tourism Awards**

- 5th global award received by Destination Guyana in 2019

**Georgetown, Guyana (August 29, 2019):** Guyana, through the work of the Guyana Tourism Authority and its partners, was awarded the distinguished Destination Stewardship Award from the Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO) during the Caribbean Sustainable Tourism Awards. The awards ceremony was held on Thursday, August 29<sup>th</sup>, 2019 at the Caribbean Sustainable Development Conference in St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

The CTO Caribbean Sustainable Awards identify and showcase sustainable tourism good practices in CTO’s 26 member destinations. The awards recognise individuals, groups, organisations or companies in any of the CTO’s member countries that are implementing initiatives that embrace sustainable tourism concepts and core values. These initiatives should also help to enhance the country's tourism product offerings and advance sustainable and responsible tourism in the Caribbean.

Guyana was awarded the Destination Stewardship Award, which highlights a country, region, town, village or community that is making solid strides towards sustainable tourism management at the destination-level. Recipients of the award are recognised for ongoing and integrated initiatives and programs designed to improve sustainable tourism planning and promote the widespread adoption of good practices, ensure multi-stakeholder engagement, address social and community issues, foster economic linkages, preserve cultural heritage and protect the environment.

The six judging criteria of this award include contribution to:-

1. improving the long-term competitiveness of tourism businesses and destinations
2. enhancing the well-being of communities as healthy places to visit, live and invest
3. preserving and conserving cultural, historical and natural heritage
4. promoting a sense of place and authenticity
5. involving tourism stakeholders in decision-making
6. communicating and promoting sustainable tourism good practices to other tourism stakeholders

Guyana has been making sizable strides in all areas highlighted. This includes expanding community-led and owned tourism and sustainable tourism offerings through a partnership with the Ministry of Indigenous Peoples’ Affairs and four villages; fostering inter-ministerial and stakeholder collaboration to preserve the natural and cultural heritage treasures of Guyana and support sustainable tourism development; and maintaining and building on its authentic tourism offerings and natural landscapes. This reflects the Guyana Tourism Authority’s strategic focus on adopting sustainable destination management, development, and marketing best practices as part of all of its operations and programmes.

Present to collect the award was Carla James, Deputy Director of the Guyana Tourism Authority. “We are extremely honoured to have received this award. Guyana, through the work of the Guyana Tourism Authority and its partners, has expended considerable effort in recent years to incorporate sustainable tourism best practice into all aspects of its tourism strategy, policy, planning and programming,” said James. “We are committed to maximising the positive socio-economic and conservation outcomes from tourism and to continue to be stewards of Destination Guyana.”

The judging committee selected Guyana as the winner of this award for its “impressive sustainable tourism practices and community-led tourism framework which promotes job creation, helps preserve local traditions and customs, promotes low-carbon lifestyles and provides a livelihood for indigenous communities.” Karanambu Lodge was named the Sustainable Accommodation Award Winner. Melanie McTurk was there to accept for Karanambu Lodge.

Earlier this year in March Guyana was recognised as the world’s #1 “Best in Ecotourism” and one of the Top 10 Sustainable Destinations by the Green Destination Foundation and ITB Berlin. Recognition was also received for the best destination video at the Golden City Gate Foundation at ITB. And in June, Guyana was recognised as the “Best in Sustainable Tourism” by the Latin American Travel Association (LATA). The CTO award demonstrates Guyana’s long-standing commitment to a Green State Agenda and the global branding benefits associated with its efforts to become a leading sustainable destination.

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**About the Guyana Tourism Authority.** The Guyana Tourism Authority (GTA) is a semi-autonomous governmental organisation responsible for developing and promoting sustainable tourism in Guyana through collaboration with sister agencies and the tourism private sector in order to maximise local socio-economic and conservation outcomes and improve the visitors’ experience. The GTA is focused on Guyana becoming recognised locally and internationally as a premier destination for protecting its natural and cultural heritage, providing authentic experiences, and maximising local economic benefits. For more information, visit [www.guyanaturism.com](http://www.guyanaturism.com) or call (592) 219-0094.